Soil Survey

photo: NRCS Oklahoma

Soil Scientist Clay Salisbury uses the Munsell Color Book to determine color of soil.

In 1999, the Soil Survey program celebrated its 100th year of operation. The first soil surveys were conducted to find areas for the expansion of agriculture. Today, soils data has many more uses, including wetlands identification and the selection of sites for development, road building, waste disposal, and pollution control. Methods of collecting and publishing data have also changed. Soil maps are now being digitized.

Soil surveys provide a field-based scientific inventory of soil resources, including soil maps, data about the physical and chemical properties of soils, and information on the potentials and limitations of each soil. The Natural Resources Conservation Service is the lead Federal agency responsible for the soil mapping of private lands. Other state and local agency partners also contribute both staff and money to the mapping effort. Soil surveys have many uses, but are intended for people to determine the best uses of the land based on soil type. Soils data can be used to determine highly erodible areas, potential wetlands, sites where livestock manure could be distributed with little environmental impact, prime farmland, or other soil interpretations critical to natural resource management. Soils data is also useful to urban planners and other government agencies.

Status of Oklahoma Soil Survey

photo: USDA

photos: NRCS Oklahoma

Devastating results to the land from the Dust Bowl days in Oklahoma.

The first soil surveys were conducted a century ago. Just as time has progressed, so has soil mapping technology. The digitizing of soil maps and the development of the soil survey geographic database are an integral part of the soil survey process today. They are completed concurrently with other activities in both initial and maintenance soil survey projects. A soil survey geographic database is one of the products of a completed soil survey. The soil survey geographic database is maintained in the field office and archived at the National Cartography and Geospatial Center.

The soil survey geographic database consists of:

☑Spatial data, such as the digital soil survey map

☑Attribute data, such as the soil survey area map unit record. Data from the national soil information system (NASIS).

☑Associated source information (metadata).

More soils information is available on the Oklahoma NRCS Homepage: www.ok.usda.gov

Oklahoma Soil Survey Digitizing and Certification Status
November 2000

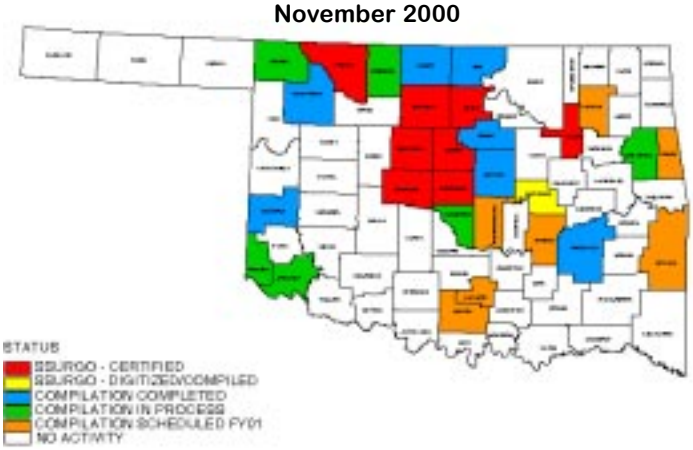

photo: NRCS Oklahoma

Port Silt Loam- - Oklahoma's State Soil

photo: NRCS Oklahoma

photo: USDA